

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-13, 15-24 and 27-38 are presently pending in the application of which claims 1, 6, 9, 17, 19, 22 and 27 are independent.

Claim Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 17 was rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Herbert Van de Sompel et al., "Reference Linking in a Hybrid Library Environment", Part 1 and Part 2, D-Lib Magazine, April 1999, Volume 5, Issue 4 (hereafter "Van de Sompel"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

Summary of Claimed Invention

The claimed invention provides a mechanism for a hyperlink associated with a semantic value to be resolved based on a user-supplied preference to retrieve digital objects. For example, if a user that clicks on a hyperlink referencing certain content has access to both subscription-based services and non-subscription based services, the user determines which of the services is to be used in resolving the hyperlink to one or more resources for the content. On the other hand, where a user does not subscribe to a subscription-based service, the hyperlink may be resolved by non-subscription-based services when the user clicks on the hyperlink. The user-supplied preference enables a hyperlink to be resolved differently based upon whether the user has access to subscription-based services and/or non-subscription-based services.

The claimed invention provides a controlled vocabulary that is used to specify a unique variety of hyperlink. The hyperlink contains a semantic value and a uniform resource locator (URL). The URL is not for a service provided to resolve the hyperlink, but rather refers to a hyperlink redirection facility. The hyperlink redirection facility receives user-supplied information regarding user preferences for resolution services (in one implementation through the use of a cookie). The hyperlink redirection facility modifies the original request to take into account the user preference and returns the modified request to the user for forwarding to a service provider for request resolution. The service provider receives the modified request and

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

directs the request to a resolution facility that provides resources, such as search results. The resources are then returned to the user by the service provider.

Summary of Claim Amendments

Applicants have amended the independent claims to indicate that the user-supplied preference/information used to modify the request is identified/received by the hyperlink redirection facility/server prior to any communications being sent to the user soliciting the preference/information.

Summary of Van de Sompel

Van de Sompel describes a method of linking references in a hybrid library environment. A system is described whereby a user selects a link identifier holding an ID of the server from which the link-source originates, a database ID of the database where the link-source originates, a unique record ID of the link-source within that database, and the server process that is executed by clicking on the link identifier. Clicking on the identifier transfers the identifier to a local target that is used to pull the link-source into its environment. The document is parsed into a generic format and parameters are extracted. The parameters are cross-referenced with a database and the user is presented with a bundle of links which may contain information of interest to the user. The user then selects one of the options from the bundle of links and the server resolves the link and the user is redirected to the resolved location.

Argument

Van de Sompel fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of Applicants claim. Specifically, Van de Sompel fails to teach or suggest the newly added limitation in claim 17 that the user-supplied information used to resolve the hyperlink is received prior to any communication being sent to the user soliciting the information. Applicants application noted as examples that the user-supplied information may be contained within a cookie sent to the redirection facility or may be contained in a database referenced by the redirection facility (see page 8, lines 22-24). In contrast, Van de Sompel clearly requires a user-selection from among the possible sources ("the bundle of links") that may be used to satisfy the user request. The

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

Examiner recognized this requirement in the quoted language in the Office Action ("The explicit user action identifies records that the user considers relevant", see pages 4 and 5).

Additionally, claim 17 also includes the steps of "identifying a second resolution service to employ to resolve the hyperlink and forwarding at least some of the link information via the user to the second resolution service for resolution of the hyperlink where the resolution service fails to return content to the user" and "identifying the resolution service that failed to return content to the user before the forwarding step." Applicants respectfully suggest that neither of these limitations are taught or suggested by Van de Sompel. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the step of identifying the second resolution service does not merely recite the repetition of the previous functionality, but rather is a fallback approach of identifying an alternative in the case of an initial failure. The identifying takes place "where the resolution service fails to return content to the user". This is not the same as initially providing multiple links to a user for a selection.

Since Van de Sompel fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 17, Applicants respectfully request its allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 11-13, 15-20, 22, 24 and 35-38 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Van de Sompel in view of Ferguson et al (United States Patent No.: 5, 819, 092, hereafter "Ferguson"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

The arguments submitted above for claim 17 are equally applicable to each of the independent claims 1 (upon which claims 2, 4 and 35 are dependent), 6, 9 (upon which claims 11-13, 15-16 and 36 are dependent), 19 (upon which claims 20 and 37 are dependent), and 22 (upon which claims 24 and 38 are dependent). Claim 18 is dependent upon claim 17 discussed above and the arguments submitted for claim 17 also apply to claim 18. Ferguson is cited by the Examiner as teaching or suggesting a controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink including a semantic value but does not include the missing limitations discussed above.

As noted above, all of Applicants independent claims as amended (and thus the dependent claims as well) now include the element that the user-supplied preference/user-supplied information used to modify the request is identified/received by the hyperlink

Docket No.: OIQ-991RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

redirection facility/server prior to any communications being sent to the user soliciting the preference/information. Additionally, claim 6 also includes the additional limitation missing from claim 17 and discussed above of identifying a second service provider/resolution service to service the request in the event of the failure of the first service provider/resolution service to resolve the request. Since the combination of Van de Sompel and Ferguson fails to teach all of the elements of Applicants claims, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 11-13, 15-20, 22, 24 and 35-38.

Claims 3, 10, 21 and 23 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Van de Sompel in view of Ferguson in further view of Herbert Van de Sompel, "Extended Services in a Hybrid Library Environment, A Presentation to the Second Workshop on Linkage from Citations to Electronic Journal Literature", June 9, 1999. Boston MA(hereafter "Van de Sompel 2"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner cites slide 20 in Van de Sompel 2 as showing the use of a cookie to identify the user-preference for resolving the request. However, the cookie referred to in the slide appears to be referring to the setting of a cookie to the URL of the SFX server as part of the SFX server resolution process rather than any sort of user-supplied cookie containing a user preference or user-supplied information to be used by the redirection facility in resolving the request. Accordingly, Van de Sompel 2 in combination with Van de Sompel and Ferguson does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claims 3, 10, 21 and 23.

Claims 27-34 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Van de Sompel in view of Ferguson in further view of Gerace (United States Patent Application 5, 991, 735 A). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

Gerace is cited by the Examiner as teaching or suggesting the presentation of an advertisement to a requestor based upon the examined criterion. However, Gerace does not teach or suggest that the user-supplied preference used to modify the request is received by the redirection facility prior to any communications being sent to the user soliciting the preference.

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

As pointed out above, neither Van de Sompel nor Ferguson teach or suggest the missing limitation either. Accordingly, Applicants request the allowance of claims 27-34.

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

Application No.: 09/437378

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this statement. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 12-0080, under Order No. OIQ-001RCE from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: November 29, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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